Middle School Academic Program 2022-23

TASIS

THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN ENGLAND

TASIS England Mission Statement

The School's purpose is to realize its core values. We believe that: every learner has the gift of innate curiosity that we can nurture into life-long learning; all our learners can develop the ability and confidence to flourish and become who they truly are; and building a vibrant, joyful, and healthy community of principled, open-minded, and compassionate individuals is why TASIS exists.

COMMITMENTS

We realize our values through our passion as educators and the following commitments:

We promote **multiple pathways** for each learner throughout our school environment, our programs, and our community.

Our commitment to nurturing **intellectual curiosity** prepares each learner for the opportunities and challenges of the future.

We encourage continuous personal **growth** through active **engagement** and desire to seek and learn from experiences. Through a balance of support and challenge, students flourish as creative, reflective, and resilient owners of their learning.

We foster **connections and collaboration** in our community of learners by cultivating supportive relationships and celebrating the unique contributions of each member.

OUTCOMES

The outcomes of a TASIS England education were articulated over many decades through the vision of the School´s charismatic founder, Mary Crist Fleming.

Life-long Learning cultivates curiosity, exploration, and discovery, emboldening individuals to embrace a culture of learning and celebrate the journey of continuous development toward personal fulfillment.

International-mindedness promotes the exploration, communication, and celebration of diversity. Being curious and open-minded to the richness of perspective within our global community creates a desire to flourish through action and service.

Service Leadership fosters empathetic, compassionate, and principled individuals who take responsibility for sustaining healthy relationships with themselves, their families, their communities, and their environment.

MIDDLE SCHOOL ACADEMIC PROGRAM 2021-22

Table of Contents

GENERAL ACADEMIC INFORMATION

The School Day: The Academic Day runs from 8:15 a.m. until 3:20 p.m. except Wednesdays, which run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:20 p.m. Middle School students have optional Sports and Activities until 5:05 p.m. Middle School students may remain after school to study or read quietly in the library which is open until 5:00 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Attendance: Regular daily attendance is required. Students may not miss a class, study hall, or sports obligation unless he or she has been excused by the School Nurse or the appropriate member of the School's administration. If your child is absent, please email msoffice@taissengland.org or phone 01932 582336 to let the Middle School know the reason. Even if your child is ill on consecutive days, the School must be informed each morning by 8:30 a.m. If you know in advance that your child will be absent, please contact the Middle School Office so that we can plan accordingly. Please note that we are not able to grant excused absences for electively missing school. If your child needs to leave school during the day, he or she must sign out in the Middle School Office and then meet you in the car park.

Daily Schedule: Fifth Grade students operate in a self-contained homeroom, changing classrooms for some subjects. Students in Grades 6, 7, and 8 follow a different schedule each day of the week, typically with four class periods each day, plus the Tutorial/Advisory period and Lunch/Recess. At the beginning of each quarter, students in Grades 7 and 8 will receive a printed copy of their daily schedules, indicating when each class will meet. Students in Grades 5 and 6 receive new schedules at the beginning of each semester. Any changes to schedules must be made by the Head of the Middle School. Students and parents can view the schedule on the LMS, including future classes students take later in the year.

Course of Study: The TASIS Middle School academic program is underpinned by the philosophy that students should experience a solid grounding in the academic subjects of mathematics, English language arts, history, science, and foreign languages, while also experiencing a wide breadth of other disciplines, including music, art, drama, health, and physical education. Middle School students take courses in each of these subject areas every year; in their final two years, students have the opportunity to select electives in order to explore and develop other interests, inclusive of a required STEM elective. Students with exceptional experience or ability in mathematics or foreign language are placed in the course(s) which best match their level of achievement, regardless of grade level. Details of the Academic Program of Studies begin on page 6.

Participation in the after-school **sports and activities program** is optional, but once a student has enrolled in a sport or activity for the fall, winter, or spring term, his or her attendance is expected, and absences should be reported in advance to shudgens@tasisengland.org.

The School Year and Reports to Parents: The school year is divided into two semesters of two quarterly marking periods each, August to mid-January and January to June, denoted on the School calendar. Grade reports are issued at the end of each quarterly marking period, including achievement grades and effort marks in all subjects. (See details below.) Written teacher comments are provided at the end of the First Semester and conferences take place between parents, students, and teachers after the First and Third Quarters to discuss the growth and learning of the student. There are no classes on conference days and these dates are posted on the school calendar. At the end of the school year, students write their own reflections of their learning journey over the course of the year.

Academic Progress: Students are expected to keep up with daily class assignments. There are numerous opportunities for extra help from teachers, but final responsibility for completion of academic work on schedule rests with the student. Students excused from classes due to illness, field trips, sports tournaments, etc., are responsible for all coursework and assessments missed due to the absence and must make the work up in a reasonable time upon return to class. Students are always encouraged to seek guidance on studying and time management from their teachers or their advisor. Please see the Homework section on page 24 for expectations.

Student assessments and grades are posted regularly on the LMS (Learning Management System) on the class page for each course in which students are enrolled. Students and parents have access to the LMS through the student and parent portals in order to monitor graded work and check progress. Day-to-day assignments and resources are managed through Google Classroom. While parents do not have direct access to their child's Google Classroom, we encourage parents to review Google Classroom together with their child occasionally to monitor progress, or more regularly if necessary.

Grading: TASIS England employs a traditional A through F grading system in the core academic subjects, with the grade of A denoting Superior work, B Commendable, C Satisfactory, D Passing, and F Failure. P.E., required special courses and electives use a Progressing (PG), Achieving (AH), and Exceeding (ED) scale.

Effort Marks: Effort marks are given in each subject for each quarter to indicate the teacher's assessment of the attitude, co-operation, and determination of the student, regardless of achievement. Effort marks are numerical, on a scale of one (outstanding) to five (unsatisfactory).

Middle School Effort Indicators:

- Is attentive and engaged in classroom activities
- Brings appropriate materials and is on time to class
- Demonstrates a positive, proactive approach to coursework
- Exhibits an interest in the subject and may complete extra work independently
- Attempts to resolve difficulties by him/herself and seeks additional help from the teacher if needed
- Takes the initiative to make up missed work when absent
- Is a positive influence in the class, and helpful to peers and teacher
- Completes work/assignments thoroughly and on time
- Is willing to revise, reflect, persevere
- Follows instructions
- Complies with the MS Code of Conduct

Student exhibits the above behaviors with the following frequency

1.	Consistently	(85-100% of the time)	(Outstanding)
2.	Usually	(70-85% of the time)	(Good)
3.	Often	(50-70% of the time)	(Satisfactory)
4.	Infrequently	(30-50% of the time)	(Poor)
5.	Rarely	(less than 30% of the time)	(Unsatisfactory)

Honors: Honors lists (Grades 6–8 only) are compiled at the end of each semester. Honors are determined using a calculation of the student's semester grade point average (GPA) in the core academic subjects. To compute GPAs the following numerical equivalents are assigned: A+=4.33, A=4.00, A-=3.67, B+=3.33, B=3.00, etc. No courses are weighted. High Honors are awarded for outstanding academic achievement (A- average—3.67—and no effort mark below 3). Honors are awarded for highly commendable academic achievement (B+ average—3.33—and no effort mark below 3). Effort Honors are awarded for superior effort (1 and 2 effort marks only) in ALL classes.

MS Grading Quick Reference

Course Type	Grades	Effort Marks
Core Academic Subjects	A - F scale	✔
PE, Arts, Electives (Grades 6-8)	4-Point Scale ED, AH, PG, F	✔
Specials (Grade 5)		✔

Core Academic Subject Letter Grade Percentage Equivalents

Letter	Percentage	Letter	Percentage	Letter	Percentage	Letter	Percentage
A+	97-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A	93-96	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62
						F	< 60

PE, Arts, Electives 4-Point Grade Conversion Scale

Achievement	Letters	Percentage	**Descriptor** (see class **rubrics** for details)
Exceeding	ED	90+	Exceeding grade level expectations; achieves lesson objectives all of the time and extends self to higher level
Achieving	AH	75 - 89%	Meeting grade level expectations; achieves lesson objectives most of the time
Progressing	PG	60-74%	Making forward progress; achieves lesson objectives some of the time
Failing	F	< 60%	Making little/no progress; rarely achieves lesson objectives

ACADEMIC PROGRAM OF STUDIES

General Curriculum Information

TASIS England embarked on a major curriculum redesign in 2018. The revised Middle School curriculum in Grades 5-8 is a standards-based curriculum, informed primarily by the AERO Plus Standards. The AERO Plus standards comprise the Common Core State Standards for English and Mathematics, the Next Generation Science Standards, and additional standards for other subject areas. Background information and further detail about the AERO standards can be found at: http://www.projectaero.org/. While the redesign project is well-underway, with many units of study already complete and new resources in use, full implementation of the re-designed curriculum in all subject areas and all grades is not anticipated until the 2022-2023 school year. For the most current information about units of study in individual courses, please consult the class page on the LMS, through the Parent Portal. The Quick Reference table below offers an abbreviated overview of the course offerings by grade. Expanded information can be found below the tables.

TASIS England Middle School 2021-2022

Academic Course Offerings Quick Reference

Grade 5		
Required Core Academic Subjects, Year Long ● Language Arts ● Math ● Science ● History & Geography	***Required Specialized Courses*** ● Art ● Music & Choir ● Physical Education ● Library ● Spanish ● French ● IT Skills ● Health/PSHE	***Elective Options*** ● EAL or Learning Support
Grade 6		
Required Core Academic Subjects, Year Long ● English ● History ● Science ● Math ● Foreign Language (French, Spanish, or English Language Arts)	***Required Specialized Courses*** ● Art ● Drama ● Music (Band, String Ensemble, or General Music & Choir) ● Physical Education ● Skills/PSHE	***Elective Options*** ● EAL or Learning Support

Denotes choice required

GRADE 7

Required Core Academic Subjects, Year Long	***Required Specialized Courses***	***Elective Options****
• English • History • Science • Math (Math 7, Pre-Algebra, Algebra) • Foreign Language (French or Spanish, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced)	• Physical Education • Art • Drama • Music (Band, String Ensemble, or General Music & Choir) • Health/PSHEE	• Yearbook • Debate & Public Speaking • Writing Mechanics Workshop • EAL or Learning Support • STEM (unless taken in Grade 8; Creative Computing, Intro to Engineering Design, or Intro to Coding)

GRADE 8

Required Core Academic Subjects, Year Long	***Required Specialized Courses***	***Elective Options****
• English • History • Science • Math (Pre-Algebra, Algebra, Geometry) • Foreign Language (French or Spanish, Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced)	• Physical Education • Art • Drama • Music (Band, String Ensemble, or General Music & Choir) • Health/PSHEE	• Yearbook • Debate & Public Speaking • Writing Mechanics Workshop • STEM (unless taken in Grade 7; Creative Computing, Intro to Engineering Design, Intro to Coding) • EAL or Learning Support

*Subject to demand and availability

Denotes choice required

Fifth Grade

The Fifth grade curriculum focuses on teaching specific developmental skills within core subjects: English language arts, mathematics, science, and history. Subjects are often taught in an integrated manner, for example, reading historical fiction or non-fiction that encompasses goals from both the reading and history curricula. As part of the transition from primary school to middle school, the curriculum is delivered in a combination of a self-contained classroom with the child's homeroom teacher and specialist instruction outside the homeroom. With the exception of mathematics, students are NOT grouped by ability level and remain with their homeroom classmates throughout the day.

The **Language Arts** curriculum includes instruction in Reading, Writing, Literary analysis, Spelling, Grammar, and Vocabulary, as well as oral communication and presentation skills. Children read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, including a range of ethnic, social, and cultural situations, characters, and authors. Reading and writing (particularly nonfiction reading and analytical writing) skills are strengthened and reinforced in all of the subject areas. Children are also encouraged to read independently for their own enjoyment.

The Fifth Grade places great emphasis on the writing process, in which the tasks of writing are broken into its smaller components. The systematic process comprises pre-writing (planning and organizing) and writing (drafting, editing, revising, proofreading, etc.). Writing mini-lessons include sentence structure, paragraph and essay development, and research, while editing work focuses attention on grammar, spelling, and punctuation skills.

In the Fifth Grade, students continue to build on their **mathematics** foundation, including place value, whole number operations, decimals and fractions, percent, estimation, measurement, geometry, and graphing. Problem-solving is emphasized. Students are placement tested and grouped, with some students receiving a faster-paced program, and others given time to practice and consolidate their skills in a spiraling fashion, where concepts are reintroduced. Mathematics text resources include *Math in Focus*, and *Mathematics, Grade 6,* by Bennett, Burger, Chard, et al (McDougal, 2012)

Science is a blend of hands-on investigations, literacy-rich activities, and interactive digital tools to empower students to think, read, write, and argue like real scientists and engineers. The units of instruction, Patterns of Earth and Sky, Modeling Matter, The Earth System, and Ecosystem Restoration, are organized around anchoring phenomena integrating content from Life Science, Earth and Space Science, Physical Science, and Engineering. Resources include *Amplify Science* from Lawrence Hall which supports the Next Generation Science Standards.

History and Geography are content and project-oriented, often using active learning to enhance the curriculum. Historical content includes Pre-History, Africa (Ancient Egypt), the Middle East (Ancient Mesopotamia), and Ancient India. Learning about current issues is a key element of the course. All course content provides students with the opportunity to learn how to articulately express thoughts verbally and in writing. Resources include TCI's *History Alive! The Ancient World* text and accompanying online resources.

Instruction in **French and Spanish** (one semester of each) is introduced to assist Fifth Grade students with making their choice of one of these languages to study in Sixth or Seventh Grade. Lessons are taught by specialist teachers with an emphasis on verbal work. The objectives of this program are to develop an awareness of the language and its sounds, in addition to learning about the culture in French and Spanish speaking countries around the world.

Library skills classes teach students to locate, organize, and use information, and meet one period per week. Children are instructed in the use of the computerized catalog and check-out system, Internet sources, and research skills. Browsing is included during the class lesson time, but children can take out books and return them at any time. The open-door policy of the Library encourages students and teachers to make the most of the facility.

In **Art** classes, students learn and apply art concepts such as abstraction, balance, line, form, pattern, shape, color, space, and texture through activities using clay, paint, wood, cloth, and metal.

Students are exposed to a wide range of musical styles through active participation in **Music** classes. They continue to build skills in the areas of reading music, playing instruments, listening and creating music both traditionally and on a digital platform. A component of the course is choral singing in a variety of genres, with a focus on singing in parts, and working cooperatively as an ensemble. Instrumental lessons are available (at additional cost) and scheduled during non-instructional time or after school.

The aim of **Physical Education (PE)** is for students to develop their application and understanding of movement skills, sportsmanship, collaboration/teamwork, and sports leadership. Students will cover six main units throughout the year, integrating health topics through the concepts of Run Jump Throw, Net games, Invasion Games,

Personal Fitness, Striking and Fielding, and Movement Concepts (Parkour/Dance). Students will be emboldened to undertake a variety of learning/teaching roles within lessons, in areas such as peer coaching, refereeing, and lesson review and reflection. Students are encouraged to take risks, learn from mistakes, and ultimately develop a lifelong passion for physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. Fifth Grade students have two physical education classes per week.

The Fifth Grade Health/PSHE (**Personal, Social, Health, and Economic)** course introduces students to the three key themes in health education: health and wellbeing, relationships, and living in the wider world. Units of study include: Organizational skills; Online safety); Respect (yourself and others); Friendship: cliques, belonging, and bullying; Growing up: puberty, hygiene and reproduction; Taking Care of the Environment.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Core Academic Subjects, Grades 6–8

ENGLISH

ENGLISH, GRADE 6

In addition to developing an appreciation for different genres of literature, this course covers the following basic English skills of grammar, vocabulary development, writing, and oral expression.

The goals are to recognize, comprehend, and apply principles of language usage, and to raise the level of reading comprehension and literary analysis. Literature is studied and analyzed through class studies of core novels which offer variety and encourage cooperative learning.

Previously taught writing skills are reviewed and reinforced. New skills are introduced with regard to grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary development, sentence structure, paragraph and essay development, and research. Creative and expository writing are taught, and students practice the writing process as they learn more about creative writing and expository writing.

TEXTS:
*Membean.com (*vocabulary*)*
The Giver (Lois Lowry)
The Tempest (William Shakespeare)
Other written resources include classic and modern short stories and poetry, the TASIS libraries, and the Internet.

LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADE 6

This course provides the opportunity for students to continue developing their reading and writing skills in English before starting to study a foreign language. Course content includes reading comprehension, writing skills, grammar, spelling, and mechanics. In addition to direct instruction in Language Arts, some class time is also used to support students in the completion of assignments from other subjects.

Language Arts is taken in addition to English and takes the place of a foreign language. Selection of this course is made in consultation with parents and teachers and must be approved by the Head of Middle School.

ENGLISH, GRADE 7

Seventh Grade English deepens the student's awareness of, appreciation for, and understanding of literature and strengthens the basic skills of grammar, spelling, vocabulary, oral expression, listening, and writing. Where possible, skills are developed through the literature, and a variety of techniques are used to foster individual comprehension, curiosity, critical thinking, imagination, sensitivity, cooperation, responsibility, and confidence.

Course content includes: reading (the study of novels, poetry, and plays); writing (creative writing, essay writing, book reports); grammar (including basic parts of speech and usage taken from student-generated work and errors whenever possible); vocabulary (from literature, day-to-day work, and *Membean.com*); speaking experience (through presentations, reading, drama, and discussion); listening skills (through our day-to-day interaction and peer conversation); and finally, study skills (through the formal evaluation process).

TEXTS:
*Membean.com (*vocabulary)
A selection of multicultural novels, plays, poems, and short stories such as:

- *Esperanza Rising*
- *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*
- *Beowulf*
- *Twelfth Night (*William Shakespeare)
- *Boy (*Roald Dahl*)*

Students also choose from a variety of contemporary novels for independent reading and book talks.

ENGLISH, GRADE 8

The Eighth Grade English course is designed to further students' appreciation of different genres of literature (novels, plays, poetry) and a variety of writing domains, in addition to mastery of, and practice in the basic skills of grammar, spelling, and acquiring vocabulary. Particular time and attention is paid to the craft of writing and composition (essay, analytical, creative, research, oratory), preparing students for Upper School and formal writing requirements.

Course content, activities, and literature are chosen to engage and appropriately challenge the reader. Emphasis is placed on the drafting of writing, spelling, grammar, research, critical thinking, effective oral interaction, and general study habits. In addition to *Membean*, vocabulary words are taught on a weekly basis through literature, etymological background, word relationships, and practical application in the context of students' own writing.

TEXTS:
*Membean.com (*vocabulary)
A selection of novels, plays and poetry including:
Romeo and Juliet (William Shakespeare)
Sonnets, English and Italian
A selection of short stories
Students also choose from a variety of contemporary novels for independent reading and book talks.

HISTORY

HISTORY, GRADE 6

Students engage in active learning to study the history of China, Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome, including Roman Britain. Students are challenged to learn though a large variety of developmentally appropriate activities. Skill development includes an understanding of chronological thinking, using primary and secondary source material, synthesizing information through quality note taking, library research, writing, and debate skills. Critical thinking is developed through class activities and during lively class discussions, and current issues are embedded throughout the course. Resources include TCI's *History Alive! The Ancient World* text and accompanying online resources.

HISTORY, GRADE 7

The aim of this course is to inspire students and develop historical thinking skills through the study of Medieval Europe, Islam, Renaissance and Reformation, the study of Latin America and Indigenous Peoples of the Americas. The approaches to learning are varied and designed to engage the curiosity of the learner. Students take part in a number of projects that enable them to apply critical thinking skills, historical reasoning, and develop research and writing skills. Current issues are embedded throughout the year. Resources include TCI's *History Alive! The Medieval World and Beyond* text and accompanying online resources.

HISTORY, GRADE 8

This course covers the history of the United States from the pre-revolutionary period to the end of the 20th Century. Students are challenged to develop higher level thinking skills and historical reasoning. Skill focus includes the ability to create a strong historical argument and defend a thesis, consider cause and effect and identify continuity and change over time. Using both chronological and thematic approaches, the Eighth Grade History course challenges students to use history as evidence and engage in critical thinking related to the question of what history is, close reading, sourcing, corroboration and contextualization. Current events and geography are embedded throughout the year. Resources include TCI's *History Alive! The United States through Industrialism and Modern Times* and *History Alive! The United States through Modern Times* texts and accompanying online resources.

FOREIGN LANGUAGES

The study of a foreign language is a very powerful tool which allows individuals to communicate with other cultures and communities as well as fostering empathy and respect for other countries, their beliefs and values. The TASIS Middle School foreign languages program fosters cross-cultural understanding and this is facilitated through class activities and educational foreign trips that take place each year. In class, primarily using the direct method approach (sole use of the target language), the emphasis is placed on the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Cross-cultural understanding also takes center stage in order to help our students to better understand diversity and become more principled and open-minded while being part of a global community. Real-life situations are emphasized throughout the courses. The Middle School foreign language program is designed to meet the varied and diverse needs of our student body while nurturing intellectual and cultural curiosity.

The Middle School foreign language program offers instruction in French or Spanish, each in three ability levels. Each student is placed according to ability level and prior experience in the study of a foreign language. Students continuing at TASIS follow the natural progression of courses upon the successful completion of each course.

FRENCH OR SPANISH: Beginner, Intermediate, Advanced levels

The main goal of the French and Spanish Middle School foreign language courses is to enable students to acquire a solid background in the target language through a linguistic, communicative, and cultural approach to language learning. As members of a global community, we aim to also foster cross-cultural understanding. French or Spanish is used almost exclusively in the instruction and communication inside the classroom. The four language skills of reading, writing, speaking, and listenting are emphasized and developed simultaneously. In class, teachers use different pedagogical methods in order to facilitate and nurture the intellectual ability of every child. With continuous guidance and support, students will be able to develop the necessary skills that will enable them to flourish in their future studies.

The program is composed of three levels of language acquisition: Beginner, Intermediate, and Advanced. As resources, we use textbooks for the different levels in addition to a variety of other interactive and authentic materials as well as regular posts in our online internal platform LMS. Throughout the year, students learn vocabulary and grammar associated with different units of study. School, family, environment, pastimes, travelling, social/political issues, and advertising are some of the many examples explored in the classes. In order to promote and nurture intellectual curiosity, all students are encouraged to participate and take an active role in all class activities.

LANGUAGE ARTS, GRADE 6

This course provides the opportunity for students to continue developing their reading and writing skills in English before starting to study a foreign language. Course content includes reading comprehension, writing skills, grammar, spelling, and mechanics. In addition to direct instruction in Language Arts, some class time is also used to support students in the completion of assignments from other subjects.

Language Arts is taken in addition to English and takes the place of a foreign language. Selection of this course is made in consultation with parents and teachers and must be approved by the Head of Middle School.

MATHEMATICS

Students are placed in an appropriate level math course based on the results of math placement testing, standardized math test scores, recommendations of students' previous math teachers, and/or records presented to us from previous schools.

Mathematics contains many skills which are strengthened and built up during each successive year. These basic skills include addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division of whole numbers, fractions, and decimals. Measurement and geometry are also reviewed annually, and become more sophisticated with the inclusion of more advanced computation and related activities. Students are introduced to functions and algebraic expressions from the Sixth Grade. "Mental math" problems are presented often to increase students' powers of abstract numerical thought and calculation. Word problems are used to develop computational skills, critical thinking in practical situations, and students' self-confidence.

As the switch to the SI (International System) or Metric System is not yet universal, the customary units of inches, cups, pounds, etc. are also taught. American money is presented too, as a working knowledge of the units of currency is commonly assumed in terms of standardized testing.

The Common Core State Standards (U.S.A.) are incorporated in the materials, the philosophy, and the methodology of the middle school math courses.

The Math Department makes use of all technologies available to us. Calculator usage is integrated into lessons where appropriate. The use of specialized software provides a valuable resource for instruction.

MATHEMATICS 6

In Math 6, students are instructed in a broad range of topics in order to establish a solid foundation upon which future mathematical knowledge will build. Instruction is delivered using a variety of methods. Some content is presented with the goal of introducing the students to a particular concept or skill, while other material is to be mastered. Skills to be mastered include: adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing whole numbers, fractions, mixed numbers, and decimals; identifying least common multiples and greatest common factors; estimating products and quotients; evaluating expressions containing variables and exponents; calculating perimeter, area, and volume; measuring length, mass, and volume in both U.S. customary units and metric units; creating and interpreting graphs, classifying angles and polygons; and writing and solving equations. Learning is assessed through daily homework, class activities, quizzes, and tests. Math 6 aligns with Common Core State Standards for Grade Six.

TEXT: *Mathematics, Grade 6,* by Bennett, Burger, Chard, et al (McDougal, 2012)

MATHEMATICS 7

Math 7 is an intermediate middle school math course building logically and progressively from the Sixth Grade course material. Students are instructed in a broad range of topics in order to establish a solid foundation upon which future mathematical knowledge will build. Instruction is delivered using a variety of methods guided by current research and best practice in early adolescent education. Mathematical concepts from the Sixth Grade course are reinforced. The incorporation of more abstract concepts differentiates this course from the Sixth Grade class and all concepts are studied in greater depth. Having practiced multiple problem-solving strategies, students are expected to become proficient in choosing the most expeditious method. Learning is assessed through daily homework, class activities, quizzes, and tests. Math 7 aligns with Common Core State Standards for Grade Seven.

TEXT: *Mathematics, Grade 7,* by Bennett, Burger, Chard, et al (McDougal, 2012)

PRE-ALGEBRA/MATHEMATICS 8

This is a broad-based course that comprehensively covers various aspects of mathematics and emphasizes day-to-day applications. The primary focus is on developing and refining computational skills while reviewing arithmetic, as well as on extending algebraic and geometric concepts and applications. Developing logical and analytical thought is stressed throughout the course, as are applications to real-life mathematics problems. The course reviews basic arithmetic skills to fully equip students with the skills and knowledge they will need for the formal study of algebra and geometry. Topics include solving simple equations and multi-step equations, graphs and statistical data, computation, integers and fractions, ratios, proportion and percent, geometry (including formulas for perimeters, areas, and volumes), inequalities, word problem solving, probability, basic trigonometry, and graphing in two variables on a coordinate plane. Pre-Algebra aligns with Common Core State Standards for Grade Eight.

TEXT: *Mathematics, Grade 8,* by Bennett, Burger, Chard, et al (McDougal, 2012)

HONORS ALGEBRA 1

Honors Algebra 1 is an Upper School course that is offered to students who have demonstrated good knowledge of the material covered in the Math 7 and Pre-algebra courses, as well as by previous strong mathematics performance. The course covers all topics that would be found in a high school Algebra 1 course and aligns with the Common Core State Standards for high school algebra. The course is designed to prepare students for the upper school courses in Geometry and Algebra 2. After a brief period of intensive review, students begin the core work of the course: linear equations and inequalities, exponents, polynomials, quadratic functions and equations, exponential functions, data analysis and probability.

TEXT: *Algebra1,* by Burger, Chard, et al. (Holt McDougal, 2012)

Please note: High School credit will be granted for Honors Algebra 1 taken in the Middle School at TASIS and students taking this course will be granted advancement to take higher levels of mathematics in the TASIS Upper School. TASIS Middle School employs the same standards and text as the TASIS Upper School for this course.

HONORS GEOMETRY

Geometry is an Upper School course. It is offered to those students who have continued to excel in mathematics and have done well the previous year in Algebra I. The course provides a thorough foundation in plane Euclidean geometry with emphasis on the formal nature of definition, the structure of knowledge, and inductive and deductive reasoning. Topics of study include parallel lines and planes, congruent triangles, quadrilaterals, inequalities, similar polygons, transformations, circles, right triangles and trigonometry, planar and space measurements, and coordinate geometry.

TEXT: *Geometry* by Burger, Chard, et al (Holt McDougal, 2015)

Please note: High School credit will be granted for Geometry taken in the Middle School at TASIS and students taking this course will be granted advancement to take higher levels of mathematics in the TASIS Upper School. TASIS Middle School employs the same standards and text as the TASIS Upper School for this course.

SCIENCE

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) underpin the Middle School Science curriculum. The NGSS are described as “three-dimensional,” comprising the interrelated domains of Crosscutting Concepts, Science and Engineering Practices, and Disciplinary Core Ideas, all of which are combined in each science standard. See below for an overview of the three dimensions, taken from the Next Generations Science Standards website, https://www.nextgenscience.org/, where further information is available.

The TASIS England Middle School Science program in Grades 6, 7, and 8 follows an integrated science model and draws many of its resources from *Amplify Science* (Lawrence Hall). Each yearlong course emphasizes collaboration and includes multiple instructional units, integrating earth and space science, life science, physical science and/or engineering within each curriculum unit. The course is a blend of hands-on investigations, literacy-rich activities, and interactive digital tools to empower students to think, read, write, and argue like real scientists and engineers. These are exciting, thought-provoking units designed to engage students in science learning through complex and relevant questions and problems. Each science course also supports the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts through the application of standards for nonfiction reading, writing, and presentation skills.

SCIENCE, GRADE 6

Units of study in Grade 6 include: Microbiome; Metabolism; Traits and Reproduction; Thermal Energy; Ocean, Atmosphere, and Climate; Weather Patterns; and Earth’s Changing Climate, as well as two related engineering units.

SCIENCE, GRADE 7

Units of study in Grade 7 include Geology on Mars; Plate Motion; Rock Formations; Phase Change; Chemical Reactions; Populations and Resources; Matter and Energy in Ecosystems, as well as two related engineering units.

SCIENCE, GRADE 8

Units of study in Grade 8 include Harnessing Human Energy; Force and Motion; Magnetic Fields; Light Waves; Earth, Moon, and Sun; Natural Selection; and Evolutionary History, as well as two related engineering units.

Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Dimensions:

Dimension 1: Practices

The practices describe behaviors that scientists engage in as they investigate and build models and theories about the natural world and the key set of engineering practices that engineers use as they design and build models and systems.

Although engineering design is similar to scientific inquiry, there are significant differences. For example, scientific inquiry involves the formulation of a question that can be answered through investigation, while engineering design involves the formulation of a problem that can be solved through design. Strengthening the engineering aspects of the Next Generation Science Standards will clarify for students the relevance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (the four STEM fields) to everyday life.

Dimension 2: Crosscutting Concepts

Crosscutting concepts have application across all domains of science. As such, they are a way of linking the different domains of science. They include: Patterns, similarity, and diversity; Cause and effect; Scale, proportion and quantity; Systems and system models; Energy and matter; Structure and function; Stability and change. The Framework emphasizes that these concepts need to be made explicit for students because they provide an organizational schema for interrelating knowledge from various science fields into a coherent and scientifically-based view of the world.

Dimension 3: Disciplinary Core Ideas

Disciplinary core ideas have the power to focus K–12 science curriculum, instruction and assessments on the most important aspects of science. To be considered core, the ideas should meet at least two of the following criteria and ideally all four:

- Have **broad importance** across multiple sciences or engineering disciplines or be a **key organizing concept** of a single discipline;
- Provide a **key tool** for understanding or investigating more complex ideas and solving problems;
- Relate to the **interests and life experiences of students** or be connected to **societal or personal concerns** that require scientific or technological knowledge;
- Be **teachable** and **learnable** over multiple grades at increasing levels of depth and sophistication.

Disciplinary ideas are grouped in four domains: the physical sciences; the life sciences; the earth and space sciences; and engineering, technology and applications of science.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM OF STUDIES

Required Specialized Subjects, Grades 6–8

All students must take physical education for the entire year, plus at least one course each from the Art, Music, and Drama areas. Sixth Graders must complete a Skills course. Seventh and Eighth Graders must take a semester Health class and must complete at least one STEM course in either Seventh or Eighth Grade.

HEALTH /SKILLS/ PSHE (Personal, Social, Health & Economic Education)

SKILLS/PSHE, Grades 6

The Skills/PSHE 6 course is designed to meet the needs of Sixth Grade students at a time when more complex research, organizational, and technical skills are required for academic success. Classes, which meet once a week throughout the year, are structured to provide support and to teach the skills associated with time management, library research, computer skills, and test taking. Reinforcement and assessment of skills are based on material from core classes, particularly English, History, and Science classes. In the Second Semester, a Health unit is also included in this course in which students are introduced to various health-related topics including Personal Hygiene, Body Image, Setting Boundaries, Appropriate Social Media Use, and Conflicts Among Friends. All Sixth Grade students are assigned to this year-long course.

Health/PSHE, Grades 7 & 8

The Seventh and Eighth Grade Health/PSHE Courses introduce students to the major themes in health education and how they affect physical, mental, emotional, and social health. Throughout the curriculum, it is stressed that all the areas of health are related and equally important.

SEVENTH GRADE UNITS OF STUDY

1. What is health?: The purpose of Health Education
2. Personal Identity
3. Self-esteem and Body Image
4. Hygiene and Personal Care
5. Nutrition—the fast food industry; obesity; the food pyramid; eating disorders and their impact on physiological systems
6. Drugs, Legal and Illegal
7. Social Media, Cyber safety and Bullying, Effects on Relationships
8. Relationships: different types, including positive and negative
9. Establishing Boundaries in Relationships
10. Informed Decisions
11. Recognizing and Building Personal Skills
12. Age and Disability Discrimination
13. Introduction to Money

Resources: PSHE Association (https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/); *Fed Up* by Katie Couric, Mark Monroe, and Stephanie Soechtig

EIGHTH GRADE UNITS OF STUDY

1. Being Mentally Healthy
2. Growth versus Fixed Mindset
3. Healthy versus Unhealthy Relationships and Social Support Networks
4. Self Concept/Self-esteem
5. Self-image and the Media
6. Eating Behaviours
7. Alcohol and Drugs, Legal and Illegal usage
8. Making Healthy Decisions
9. Consent - How to Give and Receive Consent
10. Male and Female Anatomy
11. Reproductive Health
12. Prejudice and Stereotypes
13. Human Rights
14. Personal Finance and Money skills: The Value of Money
15. Next Chapter: Moving Away/Moving On to Upper School

Resources: PSHE Association (https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/); *The Teenage Body Book* by Kathleen McCoy, PhD (Berkley)

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

PE, Grades 6 - 8

The aim of PE is to provide all students with an opportunity to learn within a balanced program in which they are encouraged to further develop their application and understanding of movement skills, sportsmanship, collaboration/teamwork, and sports leadership. Students will cover six main units throughout the year. Within each unit we will look at integrating health topics through the concepts of Run Jump Throw, Net Games, Invasion Games, Personal Fitness, Striking and Fielding, and Movement Concepts (Parkour/Dance). Students will be given the opportunity throughout the various units to discover and learn about the key concepts that aim to build upon previous knowledge and skills. Each of these skills are transferable into other PE units and also classroom-based subjects. They also help each student to strengthen not only their own individual experiences, but to encourage students to identify the positive connections that arise from shared and/or group experiences. Students will be emboldened to undertake a variety of learning/teaching roles within lessons, providing opportunities to gain further knowledge and/or to develop skills in areas such as peer coaching, refereeing, and lesson review and reflection. These additional learning experiences allow students to play their part within a positive learning environment. This will provide each student with the opportunity to develop in areas such as confidence, resilience, empathy, communication skills, and their decision making. Students are given the best possible chance to flourish within PE when they are encouraged to take risks, learn from mistakes, and ultimately develop a lifelong passion for physical activity and a healthy lifestyle.

ART

Art, Grade 6

The Sixth Grade art course has been developed to give students a knowledge of the elements of Art and Design. Students are encouraged to be creative, imaginative, and expressive through a series of investigative challenges and projects. Using both two and three-dimensional materials, students are asked to develop new practical, and analytical skills as they progress through a rigorous year-long program of study. Students explore the role of the artist and the designer both throughout history, and in a variety of social and cultural contexts. Through regular critiques and class discussions, visual arts vocabulary is developed and encouraged with the aim of enriching each student's personal identity.

Art, Grade 7

The Art and Design course for the Seventh Grade students has been designed to give each student a visual arts tool kit so they can be creative, expressive, and engaged as artists and designers. During the semester, all the students will produce studies experimenting with the use of both two and three-dimensional materials as a means of communicating their ideas and designs for a series of challenges and projects. The students develop a final portfolio of work, consisting of drawings, paintings, sculptures, and collages. Students are encouraged to develop an appreciation of their own work and the work of others, and expected to participate in all aspects of the creative process. With each assignment students will also be asked to explore new art ideas through the research of relevant historical, social, personal, and cultural references.

Art, Grade 8

The Eighth Grade Visual Arts course has been structured for the students to investigate the application of the elements and principles of Art and Design. During the semester, the students create a series of projects and assignments that have been designed to motivate, challenge, and inspire the students to be creative, expressive, open, and engaged. Through practice the students develop a knowledge of working with materials in both two and three dimensions creating a final portfolio of drawings, paintings, collages, photographs, and sculptures. Students are encouraged to develop an appreciation of their own work and the work of others, and participate in group critiques. With each assignment students will also be asked to explore new art ideas through the research of relevant historical, social, personal, and cultural references.

MUSIC

All Middle School students take music each year. They may choose among Band, String Ensemble, or General Music & Choir.

BAND 6, 7/8

Middle School Bands meet throughout the year. Band is open to all middle school students who have instrumental experience and at least a basic ability to read music, at the discretion of the instructor. Beginners who wish to join the band will be encouraged to take private instrumental lessons until they have achieved a standard of playing suitable for the ensemble.

STRING ENSEMBLE 6, 7/8

The string ensembles meet throughout the year, and are open to all violin, viola, cello, and double bass players in Grades 6, 7 and 8 who have instrumental experience and at least a basic ability to read music, at the discretion of the instructor. Beginners who wish to join the ensemble are encouraged to take private instrumental lessons until they have achieved a standard of playing suitable for the ensemble.

GENERAL MUSIC & CHOIR 6, 7/8

The general music classes focus on exposure to and appreciation for various musical forms and genres, including the opportunity to make music both physically and digitally. A component of the course is choral singing in a variety of genres, including learning to read music, sing in parts, and work cooperatively as an ensemble.

INDIVIDUAL MUSIC LESSONS

These are offered to all grades as an extracurricular activity (at additional expense). Individual instruction is offered on piano, strings, guitar, flute, brass, saxophone, oboe, clarinet, percussion, and voice on a weekly basis. Please refer to the separate and more detailed form available from the Music Office for information on teachers and fees.

DRAMA

DRAMA 6

Sixth Grade Drama is a course of discovery where students explore theatre as a storytelling art form. Students explore many types of storytelling and many kinds of stories, from a variety of world cultures. Students will learn to see theatre as a universal language, and will develop their confidence in using their voice and body to portray a character and connect with an audience. Students will also be encouraged to think creatively and reflectively about their own theatre work and develop self-management skills during self-directed projects.

DRAMA 7, 8

The Drama courses in Seventh and Eighth Grades allow students to develop their skills, knowledge, understanding, and creativity in Drama. Students delve deeper into the process of creating a performance, both from a script and from a stimulus, gaining confidence in a variety of established theatre conventions and techniques. The skills developed in these courses significantly improve confidence in self-expression, public speaking, creative thinking, and risk taking. Students will get the opportunity to develop performances relevant to their own life experiences and try them out in low-stakes performance environments.

S.T.E.M.

All Middle School students are required to take a minimum of one STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) course in **either** their 7th or 8th Grade year.

CREATIVE COMPUTING

In this course, students learn to combine art, coding, and math through a variety of STEM challenges. Students may find themselves thinking about how to create a 3D model of a spiral staircase using their coding and mathematical skills, while another group of students may try to use variables and loops to make an interactive simulation of our solar system. A Scratch-based visual programming language will be used as the key tool to design meaningful, original applications, combining STEM skills such as defining problems, developing and using models, and analyzing and interpreting data.

INTRODUCTION TO ENGINEERING DESIGN

In this hands-on, project-based course students will engage in many of the steps of the engineering process. Students will learn the basics of 3D printing, including design and modeling using CAD software such as TinkerCAD and Fusion 360. Students will also learn the basics of electronics, programming, and technology in an accessible, non-threatening way. No prior knowledge or experience is necessary. There will be plenty of opportunity to work independently and collaboratively throughout the course.

INTRODUCTION TO CODING

Learn the basics of Web Development using HTML and JavaScript. Learn to create web pages and add interactivity to websites by validating form data and adding animations and forms to pages. Discover how web standards work and how to use them. Students learn how to build a basic app and will be able to learn at their own pace and work individually or as part of a group to complete projects. This process will develop analytical skills, encourage curiosity, and employ creativity to find solutions to complete tasks.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM of STUDIES

Elective Courses, Grades 7–8

Students in Grades Seven and Eight have the opportunity to select one elective per year. Scheduling is based on student preference, enrollment, availability, and conflicts with other courses. Space permitting, students may also choose from the STEM courses listed above. Courses taken in Grade 7 may not be repeated in Grade 8.

YEARBOOK

This class is open to students interested in photography, layout design, and publishing. While the ultimate goal of the course is to produce the Middle School's annual yearbook, emphasis is placed on acquiring knowledge about digital photography, fluency in the use of an industry standard software program, and mastering the principal aspects of layout design used in the publishing industry. Common publishing terms will be learned, with attention also given to gaining an understanding of basic copyright permissions.

WRITING MECHANICS WORKSHOP

Students work on individualized writing tasks to strengthen areas of weakness or further develop areas of interest. Depending on the student, this can include practicing sentence structure and variety, paragraph or essay organization, grammar, punctuation, or research skills through practice exercises, peer review, and class discussions. Classes are small and students receive customized instruction and coaching.

DEBATE & PUBLIC SPEAKING

Students learn formal techniques for effective argumentation and advocacy, while simultaneously developing critical thinking and listening skills. Students also gain experience and confidence in public speaking. Debates vary from formal to informal and topics include a variety of current issues, ethical dilemmas, and historical events.

PREPARATION FOR LEARNING - HOMEWORK

We firmly believe that the majority of learning should take place during the school day, under the guidance of classroom teachers, and that students should have a full and varied life outside of the school day, including:

- abundant physical activity;
- adequate time for reflection and sleep (9-11 hours per night);
- time to fulfill personal and household obligations, such as personal hygiene, chores, and meals;
- time to pursue other interests including music, sports, family activities, reading for pleasure, etc.

As such, school work undertaken outside the school day, referred to as homework, must have clear purpose and value, and be able to be completed independently by students. This type of work should be limited to **Preparation** and **Promoting Permanence,** and not count *directly* toward student achievement grades. **Production** activities, which rely on new learning and concepts, are not appropriate as homework and should instead take place under the guidance of the classroom teacher, in order to prevent the reinforcement of incorrect techniques or misunderstanding, and frustration and extensive time spent trying to work out new concepts without support. These three types of school work activities are further explained below, though the examples are not intended as exhaustive lists:

Preparation-activities which prepare students for learning in upcoming class(es) and **may be done at home**. Examples include:

- Reading literature
- Watching a video program
- Reading/listening to an article/podcast related to course subject matter to be discussed in class
- Reflection

Production-exploration, understanding, and application of new concepts or learning, commonly written, which are **best done in the classroom**. Examples include:

- Essay-, presentation-, speech-, or report-writing
- Research, annotation, or outlining
- Synthesis of new information
- Problem solving using new techniques or concepts
- Project or lab work
- Discussion, Debate, Inquiry

Promoting Permanence-activities which develop automaticity, fluency, speed, and long term retention and **may be done at home**. Examples include:

- Vocabulary and spelling practice
- Memorization of math facts
- Rehearsal of oral presentations or speeches; line learning
- Repetition of foreign language vocabulary, conjugations, pronunciation
- Studying course materials to prepare for assessment, which can employ a wide range of techniques
- Practice with problem solving strategies already understood in school, limited in scope and ideally offering choice
- Listening to or viewing foreign language media

These three phases of student learning: **Preparation - Production - Promoting Permanence** -- broadly align with teachers' phases of teaching: **Planning - Teaching - Assessment.** The middle phases--Production and Teaching--make best use of classroom time in order to produce the best outcomes for students, while some amount of preparation and promoting permanence can be done at home.

Responsibilities:

The guidelines below indicate the differing responsibilities with respect to the success of homework.

Students are responsible for:

- Bringing home the proper materials to complete necessary course work;
- Focusing on the task at hand, setting aside other distractions;

- Completing any work missed due to absence from class, planning ahead when possible, within the time frame agreed with the teacher;
- Seeking assistance from the teacher and/or advisor during Tutorial if having difficulty understanding concepts or managing workload;
- Contacting their teacher during the school day when necessary, rather than expecting email support in the evening;
- Understanding that studying and reviewing independently is a responsibility for which they must take ownership, even when not explicitly assigned by their teacher(s).

Parents should:

- Be familiar with the philosophy and guidance for course work expectations outside the school day;
- Provide a time and place for children to work at home with limited interruptions, particularly monitoring the use of the Internet, mobile phones, and gaming applications. We do NOT recommend students have access to devices in their bedrooms.
- Provide access to a computer, printer, and office supplies as necessary;
- Encourage children to contact the teacher with questions or concerns. While this strategy promotes student ownership, parents should feel free to reach out directly to the classroom teacher, especially if their child exceeds the allotted time frame or feels their child is finding their work particularly stressful or unmanageable.

Teachers and administrators are responsible for:

- Assigning work only for preparation and promoting permanence;
- Ensuring that expectations are set out in Google Classroom and understood by all students before they leave the classroom;
- Actively monitoring and limiting the time students spend on work outside the classroom;
- Supporting students with techniques to develop their organizational and study skills;
- Providing extension activities in Google Classroom to provide opportunities for students to remediate, reinforce, and/or extend their learning outside the classroom.

Homework Time Guidelines

The time to complete work outside of school will vary from child to child. Some students benefit from working at a slower pace, while others need supervision to ensure that they stay on task and avoid distractions such as phones, music, social media, and the Internet. Some students will benefit from the use of a timer followed by a short break in order to stay focused, while others may try to rush through their work and will benefit from a strategy designed to slow them down! As such, the guidance below is just that--guidance. If your child is having difficulty completing their work at home within the suggested times on a consistent basis please contact your child's teacher or advisor for assistance. No Middle School student should be up late (past 9:00 p.m.) completing homework, as this is not only counterproductive for the task at hand, but has a knock-on effect for the following day.

- **Grades 5 and 6**–No more than forty five minutes to one hour in total, **including** 15-20 minutes of reading.
- **Grade 7 and 8**–No more than one hour in total, **plus** 20-30 minutes of reading.

Students are not expected to have assigned homework every day, but they will benefit from developing the habit of routinely reviewing and reinforcing new learning. Work will not be assigned over holiday periods, with the exception of reading literature. Students taking advanced courses can expect to spend more time on homework. This would apply especially to students taking Algebra I or Geometry, or Upper School foreign language courses.

Middle School students are also routinely provided with **extension** opportunities in all their courses. The extension activities serve multiple purposes by providing students with alternate resources to remediate, reinforce, or extend their learning, pursue specific areas of interest, and exercise choice in their learning pathways. Extension activities can be found in the Google Classroom for each course.

ASSESSMENT

The full philosophy and practice of assessment is articulated and governed by the schoolwide Assessment Policy, which can be found on the School's website. Assessment at TASIS England supports the development of High-Quality Learning and Intercultural Learning for our students.

Intercultural Learning is the process through which we acquire knowledge and understanding through an awareness of your own culture, engagement with other cultures and perspectives, and explorations into local and global issues to enable us to interact and communicate in appropriate and effective ways in intercultural situations.

High-Quality Learning is the acquisition of skills and knowledge that results in the individual transformation and growth of each learner, and it is achieved when:

- Learning takes place in a safe, nurturing environment that encourages creativity, curiosity, and independence.
- Learning is transferable; skills and conceptual understanding can be applied within multiple contexts.
- Learning involves inquiry, critical thinking, feedback, and reflection.
- Learners have ownership of the process and are able to articulate what they are learning and why they are learning it.

TASIS England is dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge through curiosity and encourages each student to take responsibility for the learning process. We believe that the use of continuous assessment is a key part of that process and can inform teaching and learning to keep us aligned with our Mission. This is achieved through the collection, analysis, evaluation, and reporting of the assessment data related to student learning. Through a consistent school wide philosophy and understanding of the purpose of assessment, we can ensure that students are emboldened to pursue international mindedness, service leadership, and lifelong learning.

Assessment Beliefs and Values at TASIS England

Assessment is an integral part of planning, teaching, and high-quality learning at TASIS England. Teachers are encouraged to employ a wide variety of assessments, based on clear and realistic learning expectations and standards-based outcomes. Success criteria should be clear and shared with students to promote a reflective learning culture. Assessment should provide regular and meaningful feedback to enable students to take responsibility for their own learning. All assessments serve a formative purpose, even at the culmination of a unit, semester, or course. Assessment should use appropriate and diverse strategies for students to demonstrate their learning and should guide them towards their next steps.

Assessment at TASIS England is focused on improving and developing, rather than simply documenting, student learning and performance. It identifies what students know, understand, and can do at different stages in the learning process.

The elements that define curriculum at TASIS England are:

- The written curriculum or "*What do we want our students to learn?"*
  The learning outcomes, concepts, skills, attitudes and actions we have identified in the school's written curriculum.
- The taught curriculum or "*How will we teach so that our students will learn best?"*
  The teaching and learning strategies, programs, and resources that best support the types of learning identified in the written curriculum.
- The learned/assessed curriculum or "*How will we know that our students have learned?*" *(when and what)*

Assessment Purpose

The main purposes of assessment are to:

- ***Promote*** student learning – assessment provides an opportunity for students to reflect and act upon the feedback they are given.
- ***Provide*** feedback related to planning and teaching in order to inform the next stages of learning:
    - Assessing, teaching, and learning are directly linked and function purposefully together.
    - Meaningful assessment engages students and encourages them to take responsibility for their own learning.
- ***Evaluate*** the effectiveness of our curriculum and program – assists in curriculum review cycles and program action plans

Assessment at TASIS England enables:

- **Students** to understand more about themselves as a learner and to become reflective and active members in the learning process.
- **Teachers** to understand more about their students' strengths and challenges and plan appropriate, differentiated learning opportunities to meet those needs.
- **Parents** to understand more about their child as a learner and strategies that enhance their development.
- **Our school** to understand our community of learners and to evaluate and develop curriculum appropriate to the needs of our diverse group of learners.

Effective assessment:

- Improves and encourages student learning by providing effective **feedback** on the learning process and outcomes;
- Guides **planning, teaching** and **learning**;
- Ensures that student **understanding**, **knowledge** and **skills** are assessed **prior to, during,** and **after** new learning occurs;
- Is a continuous process that provides **recorded evidence** of student **progress** and **learning** over time;
- Is directly related to **learning outcomes/curriculum standards**;
- Utilizes a **wide range of strategies/tools**;
- Has clear **scoring criteria** that are known and understood by students in advance;
- Involves frequent opportunities for students to be assessed in **relevant and meaningful ways**;
- Engages the learner in the **reflection** of their learning;
- Is **reported** clearly and regularly to students and parents.

In alignment with our definitions of High-Quality Learning and Intercultural Learning, we also believe that assessment should be:

- Accurate, fair, and reliable;
- Clearly articulated and accessible for both teachers and students;
- Modified to suit different learning needs and styles;
- Consistent across grades, departments, and classes;
- Supportive of intercultural beliefs and perspectives;
- Significant, engaging, and relevant;
- Supportive of developing higher-order thinking skills;
- Positive and encouraging of growth;

Middle School Assessment Practices

Just as Middle School marks a period of developmental transition in students, so do the assessment practices used in the middle years. While all assessment seeks to advance the learning process, in Middle School students gain greater exposure to more formal assessment practices in preparation for more high-stakes assessments they will face in the Upper School years. In addition to the various assessment modalities described above and administered throughout the year, **cumulative semester assessments** (one class period in length) are administered in Sixth and Seventh Grade (optionally, depending on the subject), and Eighth Grade at the end of each semester. Semester **exams** (two-hour blocks, with approximately 90 minutes of assessment) are administered only to students in Upper School level courses. At the end of the second semester, Eighth Grade students have semester exams in core academic courses in preparation for examination practices in Upper School. Cumulative semester assessments contribute 10% toward the semester grade in a course.

In order to promote planning and communication with students and parents, all assessments which contribute directly to students' achievement grades are posted in advance on the **Learning Management System (LMS)**. Students who have more than two assessments in a given day are encouraged to speak to their advisor or classroom teacher to rearrange one of the assessments to achieve a manageable workload.

The Middle School also employs a number of **external assessment instruments** that do not contribute directly to students' achievement grades, but are instead used to provide standardized metrics of student progress and/or opportunities for enrichment and challenge. For example, MS students take part in standardized MAP Growth testing through the NWEA organization (this replaces ERB CTP testing formerly administered in the Middle School) and the UKMT Mathematics Challenges.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

The School expects students to behave with integrity, openness, and honesty in all areas of school life. These high standards of behavior underpin our values as a community that can work and play together with trust, maximize the value of each individual's learning journey, and enable students to represent the School, their family, and themselves with pride.

To that end, students are expected to complete their school work with their own best efforts and use of authorized resource materials, without unattributed aid from others. As part of the learning process, students are educated about the fair and legal use of source materials and work from other authors, and assistance that may be received from others outside the classroom. Students will be asked to include the following Honor Pledge on their assessments: "I confirm that this is my own, independent work."

Academic dishonesty—cheating or plagiarism—is a serious matter, but one that can arise due to misunderstandings about what constitutes acceptable help, feeling pressure to reach a certain level of attainment, or failing to plan and allow enough time to complete assignments. The table below is included to help students understand the difference between honest and dishonest learning behaviors.

Honest Learning Behaviors	Dishonest Learning Behaviors
Allowing adequate time to complete assignments, asking for an extension if necessary Asking for help from teacher, another adult, or peer-helper if assignment or content is unclear	Copying another student's classwork or homework, or copying solutions found online
Helping a peer understand the material or discussing ideas with them or directing them to the teacher for clarification	Allowing another student to copy classwork or homework, doing work for another student or otherwise giving unauthorized assistance in the preparation of work for credit
Allowing adequate time to prepare for assessments, asking for an extension if necessary Keeping your eyes on your own work and completing the assessment to the best of your ability	Copying from a classmate, using a "cheat sheet" or accessing online information during an assessment Getting unauthorized information in advance about the assessment

Completing your own work, allowing adequate time to do the work to your best standard and seeking assistance from the teacher, another adult, or peer-helper if necessary	Submitting others' work for credit as one's own or using unauthorized materials in the preparation of work for credit, obtained either in or out of class
Use source materials to research facts and others' ideas and include them in your work, giving credit to the author of the source material, using accepted standards for citation such as MLA, APA, or Chicago	Plagiarizing by copying directly from a source or "cutting and pasting" from digital resources without acknowledgement, using quotation marks, and/or citation by footnote, bibliography, or reference
Restate or paraphrase in your own words an author's original idea, incorporating them in your work to support your own idea, thesis, or claim, giving proper credit to the source's author(s)	Paraphrasing, rearrangement of phrases, and restatement of an author's original idea without attribution to the author(s)

All matters concerning academic dishonesty will be referred to the Middle School Pastoral and Academic Coordinators and the Head of Middle School and subject to the processes of our Behavior Policy, including sanctions for the relevant work submitted, parent notification, and the potential for further disciplinary action, including detention, in-school discipline day, fixed-term exclusion, and/or behavior monitoring or probation.

In living our School's mission to "nurture intellectual curiosity and embolden each learner to flourish as a principled, open-minded and compassionate member of a global community," each student's commitment to academic honesty serves as an anchoring guide post on the journey to becoming a lifelong learner and a principled, committed member of this and the greater community.

FACULTY ADVISORS

Every student in Grades 6–8 has a faculty advisor. The advisor is there to work with his/her advisees in all areas of school life–to monitor academic and pastoral progress, to counsel, to listen, and to help students set goals. The advisor stays informed of the student's progress in all areas, and the advisor's written reports become part of the student record. Advisories meet formally weekly, using lessons from the Responsive Advisory model. During the tutorial periods, assemblies take place, students can seek help, and/or work on schoolwork. In the Fifth Grade, the student's classroom teacher is his or her assigned "advisor".

SUPPORT SERVICES

English-as-an-Additional Language (EAL)

In the Middle School, EAL instruction is customized to meet the individual needs of each student, with instruction provided both in small group "pull out" lessons as well as within the mainstream classroom. In addition to supporting regular curriculum instruction, additional instruction may be given in grammar and pronunciation as well as in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Please see the EAL Handbook for a full description of EAL testing, levels, support, and programming.

Learning support

TASIS The American School in England has limited facilities for students with mild, specific learning difficulties, but will do all that is reasonable to comply with its moral and legal responsibilities, and work within the guidance provided in the SEND Code of Practice 2014.

We aim to accommodate the needs of students who have mild, specific learning difficulties for which, with reasonable adjustments, the school can cater adequately. These students are capable of functioning in the academic mainstream, but require small group or individual attention, or specific learning accommodations.

The goal of the TASIS Learning Support Team is to provide the academic support students require in order to reach their potential. TASIS recognizes the importance of including students, parents, guardians, classroom teachers, learning support staff, and administrators in a collaborative process to deliver special services to students with mild, specific learning difficulties.

TASIS provides a range of support services from Lower School through Upper School. Areas of support offered include informal observations, academic support, classroom guidance, and individual counselling. The Learning Support Team also provides information about community-based providers.

TASIS does not offer a full continuum of special education programs. Admission is contingent upon a match between the student's and family's needs and the level of service available. For that reason, the admission of any student with mild, specific learning difficulties is determined on a case-by-case basis using multiple sources of information such as school records, evaluations, and interviews with students, parents, teachers, and program capacity.

It is important that parents of students who have received special services or who believe they may need support contact the Admissions office as soon as possible. Specific information relating to a child in need of learning support will be considered by the administrators and learning support staff who make determinations about admissions.

It is our hope that each and every one of our students will find success in their academic endeavors at TASIS; this program will assist in accomplishing that goal.

Mild, Specific Learning Difficulties Testing

TASIS has limited support and staffing for students with mild, specific learning difficulties. If particular academic problems encountered by a student during the course of the year suggest that he or she may have such difficulties, parents may wish to arrange for the student to be tested by an Educational Psychologist (in the UK called a Chartered Psychologist) as needed. Parents who have concerns or questions about their child's academic needs or progress are encouraged to contact the School. Initially, parents should contact the classroom teacher directly. Following this, administrators are also available to meet with parents about academic concerns.

Student Learning Support

Our Learning Support Program provides structured learning support for students with mild, specific learning difficulties, and it is intended to assist those students identified as needing extra assistance with their schoolwork. The Learning Resource Specialist works with students, either individually or in a small group, one or two times a week, typically in-class, or during tutorial, an elective period, or after school. In some cases, the foreign language requirement will be deferred to a later academic year in order to give the student the support he or she requires. All students considered for the Learning Support Program must have educational diagnostic assessments that are current within 3 years.

At the beginning of the program, the Learning Resource Specialist will prepare a learning profile for the student, which will identify goals and strategies for instruction. The student's progress will be monitored on a regular basis, with parents kept informed throughout the school year. The Learning Support Program uses a variety of approaches to support the instruction of reading, writing, and mathematics, and to help students learn appropriate study and organizational skills. The Learning Resource Specialist works closely with the students, classroom teachers, and the parents, as well as with our Middle School counselor when necessary, to provide a coordinated, individualized program which includes the creation of a learning profile.

ACADEMIC MONITORING

Students may be placed on Academic Monitoring at the discretion of the Head of Middle School in consultation with Middle School faculty and the Student Support Team if a student is making inadequate progress in one or more courses. During monitoring the student and his/her parents receive weekly feedback from the classroom teachers(s). The student may also receive additional support from the Learning Resource Centre, and his/her advisor in order to get back on track. A parent conference may be required to discuss additional interventions, including outside tutoring or other support services. Academic Monitoring is intended for short term interventions, generally for four weeks, and is intended as a constructive, rather than punitive measure. Students who are on Academic Monitoring may have their Re-invitation to the school deferred, pending the outcome of the monitoring period.

ACADEMIC CONCERNS

Student and parental academic concerns (poor achievement, questions about assessments, grading, or effort marks, workload, assessment conflicts, etc.) should be directed to the classroom teacher. Students should attempt to advocate for themselves and contact the teacher directly, through email or in person. Students can also ask for help from their advisor or the school counsellor if they are feeling overwhelmed or feel they need some help in interceding with a classroom teacher. Chronic or unresolved concerns can be escalated to the Head of Middle School, either by the student, advisor, or parent, but generally concerns should first be directed to the classroom teacher.

FORMAL COMPLAINTS

Concerns unresolved in the steps noted above can be escalated to the Head of School using the process outlined in the Complaints Policy, which can be found in the Policies section of the TASIS website.

TASIS

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